

CONNECTICUT MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION

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Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **R.B. No. 5289, *AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY***

Chairmen Maynard and Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative Scribner and Distinguished Members.

The Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) and our 340 member businesses urge you to support **R.B. No. 5289, *AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY***. Connecticut's three deep-water ports, New London, New Haven and Bridgeport are one of Connecticut's most valued maritime assets. Currently underused, needing dredging, expanded berthing facilities, and the installation of cranes and infrastructure, they have the potential of competing for business that presently goes to our neighbors here in New England and further south. Major highway, ferry service, and rail service located in the cities of New Haven, New London and Bridgeport make the potential of our ports even greater! Expanded Connecticut ports will take trucks off I-95, grow Connecticut jobs, and bring more goods into our region to benefit all our citizens.

Control of the state's commercial waterfront is with Connecticut's Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aviation and Ports. The Connecticut Maritime Commission currently is the primary body within the State to develop and recommend maritime policy to the Governor and the General Assembly. It is responsible for developing and updating a long-term strategic plan for all ports and waterways in the State of Connecticut with a focus on the aforementioned three deep-water ports. While a Maritime Commission deals with strategy and policy, hands-on management of the ports should fall under a new Port Authority as it does in many other Northeast states.

This initiative would have the Department of Transportation develop a Connecticut Port Authority with assistance from the Department of Economic and Community Development and other interested stakeholders. The primary job of a Port Authority is to not only manage the ports but to market them and generate the business that will utilize each port to its best capability. It is a critical issue that the personnel serving on this newly formed CPA be the right ones and that there be great due diligence in the selection process. They must be marketing oriented and motivated to use their marketing skills to advance the interests of each port. Also too, is the importance of prompt & significant initial funding that would ensure that the authority gets off to an aggressive start. And this commitment by the State has to be enduring and outside the political arena.

We urge you again to support **R.B. No. 5289, *AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY***. Proper personnel and prompt funding and a focus on marketing and success will grow the three Connecticut ports. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

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Vice Chairman- Legislative Affairs

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